



Office of
Mayor Sam Liccardo



For Immediate Release
June 16, 2016

Media Contacts:

Cities Association of Santa Clara County: Raania Mohsen, (408) 766-9534 or executive_director@citiesassociation.org

Office of Mayor Liccardo: David Low, 408-535-4840 or david.low@sanjoseca.gov

Silicon Valley Rising: Elly Matsumura (510-301-1045 or elly@wpusa.org) or Dianna Zamora Marroquin (408-518-1034 or dianna@southbaylabor.org)

South Bay Leaders Come Together on Regional Minimum Wage Proposal

Regional recommendation aims to raise minimum wage to \$15 by 2019 in Santa Clara County cities

Sunnyvale, Calif. – The Cities Association of Santa Clara County and a coalition of Santa Clara County Mayors have announced their support of a regional minimum wage proposal, providing a common path for cities throughout Silicon Valley to help ensure that more residents benefit from the region's growing economic prosperity.

The two groups endorsed raising the minimum wage to \$15 per hour by 2019, with increases taking place in three steps starting in January 2017. As a result, the regional minimum wage would reach \$15 three years sooner than the new \$15 statewide minimum wage will take effect. Mountain View, Palo Alto and Sunnyvale have already adopted ordinances that will bring their minimum wage to \$15 faster than the state.

The groups also endorsed tying future increases to inflation and including "off-ramp" provisions that would allow for scheduled increases to be delayed under certain economic conditions – two elements that also align with the statewide minimum wage legislation signed by Governor Brown in April.

"The Cities Association acknowledges the severity of income inequality throughout the nation," noted Cities Association President/Sunnyvale Councilmember Jim Griffith. "The fact is minimum wage has not kept pace with Silicon Valley's economic success for decades and thus it is an issue of regional concern. The Cities Association encourages cities to take a regional approach to protect our most vulnerable residents and to work in concert towards a uniform solution that will best benefit Silicon Valley's employees and employers."

This regional effort was launched last fall when San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo brought together a group of mayors from Santa Clara County cities and began engaging with the Cities Association to jointly explore a potential minimum wage increase.

"I'd like to thank my colleagues throughout Santa Clara County who have come together in support of a unified proposal that will help the growing number of families in our community who are struggling to make ends meet," said Mayor Liccardo. "By taking a regional approach, we will ensure that all of our residents, businesses and cities are helping address the widening gap between rich and poor here in Silicon Valley."

Working in collaboration with the Cities Association, the coalition of mayors and other community stakeholders, the City of San Jose commissioned an economic analysis to study the potential impacts of raising the minimum wage in the region.

Among the findings, the study found that raising the minimum wage to \$15 by 2019 would increase annual earnings for 250,000 workers in the county (appx 25% of the total workforce) by an average of 19.4%, or \$3,200. View the full [economic analysis report](#) and accompanying [employer survey](#).

“Silicon Valley Rising applauds this bold leadership by our allies in elected office,” said Ben Field, Executive Director of the South Bay AFL-CIO Labor Council and co-founder of Silicon Valley Rising, a campaign to build an inclusive middle class in the region that has made improved wages and job standards its top goal. “Sunnyvale and Mountain View broke ground by passing \$15 minimum wages, and now our movement has grown to unprecedented levels. This kind of regional action by over a dozen cities is a first in our nation’s history.”

The coalition of Santa Clara County mayors and the Cities Association Board Members agreed to bring the regional minimum wage proposal to their respective City Councils for consideration this fall.

Additional Quotes from local mayors and city councilmembers involved in the regional minimum wage increase effort:

Rod Sinks, Cupertino City Council and Cities Association Minimum Wage Subcommittee Member

“Though the recommendation is not binding for cities, the Cities Association strongly encourages cities to consider it as a regional effort to increase the earnings of our low-wage constituents, ease the cost of living in Silicon Valley, and promote economic growth.”

Greg Scharff, Palo Alto Vice Mayor and Cities Association Minimum Wage Subcommittee Member

“I am very pleased that we have come together to promote a regional solution which will promote economic growth and equity as well as begin the process of addressing income inequality and the high cost of living in Silicon Valley.”

Jason Baker, Mayor of Campbell

“A regional minimum wage is a groundbreaking effort to make the high cost of living in Silicon Valley a little less burdensome to working families and all those in our prosperous valley who are struggling to get by. I applaud this effort of the Cities to address regional problems with regional solutions.”

Lionel (Lon) Allan, Mayor of Monte Sereno

“A regional approach to raising the minimum wage is essential to providing equity when it comes to business growth throughout Santa Clara County. Different rules for different cities create an uneven playing field that can be damaging to local economics. We’re taking steps towards ensuring all residents feel a positive impact from any minimum wage increase.”

Derecka Mehrens, Executive Director of Working Partnerships USA and co-founder of Silicon Valley Rising

“To lift themselves out of poverty, working families need higher wages and access to more hours. The move to raise the wage to \$15 by ’19 is a critical step as Silicon Valley Rising campaigns to develop regional standards for wages, hours and benefits that will create the good jobs our communities need.”

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